

## HOUSE BILL NO. 577

INTRODUCED BY M. CAFERRO, HENRY, SANDS

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING THE MONTANA PARENTS AS SCHOLARS PROGRAM; CLARIFYING THE FUNDING SOURCE FOR THE PROGRAM; CLARIFYING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROGRAM; AMENDING SECTION 53-4-209, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 53-4-209, MCA, is amended to read:

**"53-4-209. Montana parents as scholars program -- department duties.** (1) There is a Montana parents as scholars program administered by the department.

(2) The department shall:

(a) use state ~~maintenance of effort funds or temporary assistance for needy families funds, to the extent practicable,~~ or federal funds in a program to provide public assistance ~~only~~ to eligible individuals households for the purpose of continuation of education leading toward a high school diploma, a general equivalency degree, an associate's degree, or a baccalaureate degree;

~~(b) establish or coordinate a skills training center pilot program in coordination with the board of regents or a community college district to provide training to individuals identified as appropriate through an assessment process;~~

~~(c)~~(b) allow an individual receiving public assistance from the program to attend an approved educational program if the individual:

~~(i) has completed an employee assessment conducted as provided by rule;~~

~~(ii)~~(i) meets the income and resource eligibility requirements;

~~(iii)~~(ii) qualifies as a full-time student pursuant to subsection (4); and

~~(iv)~~(iii) completes a 180-hour work activity requirement in a 12-month period that may include work study, internships, or paid employment the minimum number of hours required in an allowable work activity in a 24-month period; and

~~(d)~~(c) limit approved educational programs to educational courses that are intended to promote economic

1 self-sufficiency, not to exceed the baccalaureate level, ~~or one vocational training program; and~~

2 ~~(e) amend the state plan submitted to the United States department of health and human services to~~  
3 ~~provide that the state elects, as authorized by 42 U.S.C. 602(a)(1)(A)(ii), to define work as including all activities~~  
4 ~~permitted under 42 U.S.C. 607 and satisfactory full-time school attendance.~~

5 (3) ~~The department shall provide~~ recipients may apply for and may be eligible for scholarships  
6 ASSISTANCE provided by the department for dependent day care while the recipient is in a work activity.

7 (4) A program must require a recipient to be a full-time student, which means a recipient:

8 (a) shall maintain enrollment in at least 12 credit hours each semester or 30 credit hours a year;

9 ~~—— (b) must be~~ OR MUST BE a full-time high school or GED student as defined by the institution in which the  
10 recipient is enrolled;

11 ~~(b)(c)(B)~~ shall maintain a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 grade point scale or be making satisfactory  
12 progress as defined by the institution in which the recipient is enrolled; and

13 ~~(c) shall cooperate with paternity and child support requirements;~~

14 ~~(d) shall agree to relocate after graduation, if necessary, to seek employment in a job for which the~~  
15 ~~education was intended; and~~

16 ~~(e)(d)(C)~~ may not be allowed to remain in the program after receiving a baccalaureate degree.

17 (5) The department shall provide annual reports to the legislative finance committee and the children,  
18 families, health, and human services interim committee. The reports must include, at a minimum, an update on  
19 funding levels of the Montana parents as scholars program and the program's impact on the population served."

20  
21 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Notification to tribal governments. The secretary of state shall send a  
22 copy of [this act] to each tribal government located on the seven Montana reservations and to the Little Shell  
23 Chippewa tribe.

24  
25 NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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